



The Boy Problem.
The International Sunday School Lesson for February 11 is "The Boy Jesus in the Temple." Luke 2:40-52.

BY WILLIAM T. ELLIS.

THE wise men who keep an eye upon tomorrow are disturbed by certain ominous signs for the future of Christian sentiment. The big fact has suddenly been borne into the consciousness of a multitude of persons that children nowadays do not go to church. The average congregation, especially in the city, is of adults. The old condition, when family pews were literally filled with families, is now uncommon. Heretofore the British leaders of the church have over this condition that, following the modern fashion of forming a society for every thing they have organized a "League of Worshipping Children."

There is reason for alarm. If the children of today are not reared in the habit of church-going, it is reasonable to expect that they will not cultivate it in maturity. Even the Sunday school is no substitute for the religious training of the child. The child, if a family must make a choice for its children between attending church and attending Sunday school, they should without hesitation choose the church. It concerns the state as well as the church, that the coming generation should not miss the depth and breadth and intellectual and spiritual vision which regular church attendance does most to cultivate.

The Training of a Boy.
The first appearance of Jesus, after the flight into Egypt, is in the temple. He is seen in the temple; which the Sunday schools are to study and which is the basis of this lesson. After the presentation of the temple of the six weeks old infant, which was considered last Sunday, there came the warning of the impending massacre of the innocents. The infant population of the little town of Bethlehem—perhaps a score of children in all—fell victim to the hate of a jealous monarch.

Then came the flight into Egypt, and the long train of martyrs to the name and cause of Jesus. Joseph, warned in a dream of the cruel designs, took the young child and Mary his mother and went into Egypt, until the death of Herod.

The gifts of the Wise-men afforded the carpenter, Joseph, means for his unexpected journey, and for maintenance of his family while he should be away from his workshop. The length of the journey was perhaps only a few months. Preachers and painters have loved to dwell upon the significance of the return of Israel's second Representative and Deliverer to the land from which the fathers had banished his people. The Babe in the arms of his mother, sleeping at the feet of the Sphinx, is a familiar picture, and a striking symbolism.

Back to Nazareth.
Then came the Nazareth years, for Joseph returned not to Bethlehem but to his own home and shop at Nazareth. The birth of Jesus had fewer associations with his early years than this beautiful city, or large town, in a cup-like valley amid the hills of Galilee, about midway between the Mediterranean and the Lake of Galilee, a short distance above the rounded dome of Mount Tabor. All about are hills, and the hills are full of interest in understanding the story of the Precipitation, after looking upon the scene.

The natural beauty of the situation is unsurpassed. The hills are full of limestone caves, and I have a photograph which I took of Nazareth from the interior of one of these. I had gone into it wondering whether the Boy who played in the hills of Nazareth had perchance from this very cave, looked out upon his home and his people, and thought the "long, long thoughts" of youth.

The hills are the same as those which Jesus knew. The fountain in the center of the town, to which Mary used to go with other village maidens to draw water, is still flowing, though now the spring itself is covered with a church. Boys still play upon the streets and squares, and another olive-skinned, black-eyed lad playing in these same streets. The women still carry water as of old, though the Standard Oil can is in many places taking the place of the pail.

The Workshop Playroom.
The Boy, who is the hero of this tale, and whose life story—millions of Sunday school children are learning today, knew nothing about a modern playground but perhaps he was more favored than modern children with their elaborate play equipment. The boy who had for a playground the workshop of his father. All thinking is in the light of experience, and most of us conceive of the immortal Nazareth carpenter shop in the temple, where the carpenter shop of today, with benches and modern tools. There are such now to be found in Nazareth for Nazareth is largely modernized with great churches and schools and monasteries, all in memory of the Boy.

When in Nazareth, I found a carpenter shop of the old style, wherein workmen sat on the floor, and using both hands and feet, made agricultural implements. Doubtless, the carpenter Joseph did not build tables and chairs and window-frames and doors. His work was largely upon ploughs,—which were little more than an iron-shod bit of timber and upon yokes and spade handles. The Carpenter who made his living out of an agricultural population knew full well what it meant when he said, "My yoke is easy."

The chips on the floor of Joseph's carpenter shop were the first toys of the boy Jesus. Work was the natural atmosphere of his life. He grew up accustomed to help in all possible ways about the workshop which provided the family income. That the modern son of prosperity, with his hands, and is not under obligation to do any regular tasks is one of the lamentable defects in our modern scheme of life.

The Carpenter.
This is the only lesson upon the training in Nazareth that we shall have, and we cannot forego musing upon the Carpenter. Every person who has meditated upon the life of Jesus has pointed out that it was not as a king, or as a philosopher, or as a soldier that Jesus came, but as a member of the great army of the common people; a workman. Mr. Robert E. Speer is fond of quoting an Old English poem, the soliloquy of a carpenter:

"Isn't this Joseph's Son? Aye, it is He.
Joseph, the carpenter,—same trade as me!
I thought as I'd find it, I knew it was here."

But my sight's getting queer.
"I don't know right where as His shed might have stood.
But often as I've been a-planning my roof."

I've took off my hat just with thinking of He

"At the same work as me.
He wasn't that set up that He could stoop down.
And work in the country for folks in the town.
And I'm a carpenter, He felt a bit pride, like I've done.
At a good job begun.
"I think of as how not the parson hissen.
As is teacher and father and shepherd of men.
Not he knows as much of the Lord in that shed,
Where he earned his own bread."

The Boy at Church.
All that the country boy's first visit to the city means to a youngster nowadays, and far more, the journey to Jerusalem which the boy Jesus made in this twelfth year meant to him. It was a great event not only because of the pilgrimage to the Passover feast. This was the great social and religious event of the year. Groups of friends and neighbors set out at the same time for the journey. It was all simple and primitive, and so different from our modern travel that we scarcely can understand it. Now that railways are threading Palestine and the old ways are disappearing, it will be more difficult than ever to visualize this company of peasants tramping songfully over the hills, most of them carrying on their heads a load of simple and primitive, and so different from our modern travel that we scarcely can understand it.

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their family budget for church support or benevolences, these are ruled out of consideration in this paragraph, with a passing thought of pity. Shall a Christian retrench in his giving, when he is financially straitened? Yes, certainly, if he is obliged to cut down his directions, and if he maintains the proper proportions on the reductions which he makes along the line. But to make benevolence suffer while luxuries and pleasures thrive, to be "self-denying" at the expense of God's work, is scarcely an act of fair dealing. "But we must pay our debts first," says the householder, who has clearer vision for the near fact than for the abiding general principle. Certainly, debts must be paid; including debts to God. If we grant the correctness of the teaching concerning the Christian's obligation to give, then it becomes a real obligation, more real than the obligation to wear a certain style of clothes, eat a certain style of meals, and live in a certain style of house.

The puzzling problem of proportion in giving is solved by adopting some fixed ratio. It is not required of the Christian, as of the old Jew, that he give a tenth of his income to the Lord, any more than it is required that he obey the Mosaic enactments concerning tithing. We are under grace, and not under law. This point needs to be seen clearly, else the zealous tither will find himself in difficulties. Understanding definitely that the New Testament does not lay upon the Christian any obligation to pay the tithe, we may yet take the position that a tenth of one's income is a fair and reasonable measure at the cost of their souls. This is a good working basis. The Christian has more reason to devote one-tenth of his goods to God than had the old Jew. When a man is setting aside this much systematically, he can at least feel that he is trying to do fairly. The old Levitical rule gives a useful standard, and a standard is what is most needed, for few of us can trust our own impulses in a case like this where our own interests are so closely involved. A man who has given ten dollars six months ago to some charity, and in the virtuous consciousness of that good deed refuse all subsequent calls; whereas he should have been giving twenty-five dollars every month for charitable purposes. In all ethical questions, frail human nature needs a standard, and the standard of the Old Testament is a good one. For lack of a better measure, the old Jewish tithing system will serve wondrously well.

A law of life, perceived by the Wise Man of olden time, is that "The liberal soul shall be made fat." A depleted bank account may represent an empty life. Less money means less man. Conversely, "The stingy soul shall be made lean." Who does not know examples of thrift, parsimonious persons who have enriched their hoard of treasure at the cost of their souls? They have money, but nothing else.

Another Wisdom Saying is, "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than he meet, but it tendeth to poverty." Paul gave new form to the same truth when he said, "He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully."

Only glad giving is generous; and "God loveth a cheerful giver." The gift which the giver does not enjoy is no pleasure to God, though it may benefit the recipient.

Liberality enlarges life.
"Some men give according to their means, and some according to their meanness," runs a bright saying.

Saint Francis Xavier, the noble Jesuit missionary, said that in the confession of sins, he had never heard of a man who had never imagined, but none had ever of his own accord confessed that he was covetous.—Rauschenbusch.

The giving law is the law of life. In the deepest interpretation, we live to give. Failure to grasp this philosophy has stunted many lives, who lost by giving, when they would have won by giving.

Here is a man, rich, learned, wise, who astutely endeavors to win the good opinion of his fellows. He gives shrewdly in ways and means that fit his station; and usually his hand knows all about his right hand's doings. Actually, the total of his gifts to various charitable and religious causes is large, though he is rich in his possessions and income, it is small. Yet that man has missed his mark. His gifts do not win him gratitude or esteem, enough they elicit a measure of public praise. His clever policy is seen through by nearly everybody. There is a general feeling among his neighbors that all he does is to show off his self-interest.

He is not generous at all. While he gives a carefully measured dose of money, he is not lavish of himself. And the gift without the giver is bare. "The gift without the giver is bare." A person may so freely give of himself that he is recognized as possessed of the virtue of generosity, even though he have little or no money to bestow.

God gave his Son, Jesus gave himself. Paul first gave his own self to the churches. Christians are exhorted to give themselves, a living offering. The simplest principle in all the universe is that which goes under the name of generosity.

SEVEN SENTENCE SERMONS.
Speak with the speech of the world, think with the thoughts of the few.—John Hay.

Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.
—Longfellow.

Amid the howling wintry sea,
We are in port if we have Thee.
—Keble.

He who puts on the towel of service puts off a world of care.—Mark Guy Pearse.

The man who has begun to live more seriously within, begins to live more simply without.—Phillips Brooks.

Help us with the grace of courage that we may be none of us cast down when we sit lamenting over the ruins of our own happiness.—Stevenson.

There are many troubles which you cannot cure by the Bible and the hymn

book, but which you can cure by a good perspiration and a breath of fresh air.—Henry Ward Beecher.

BIBLE STUDY XVIII

Text Mt. 16 and 17; Mk. 8 and 9; Luke 9. Memory verse from Luke beginning with "E."

Review for the last lesson.

1. Where is Tyre and Sidon?
2. What was the purpose of Jesus in this northern journey?
3. What conditions in Galilee led him to this?

4. What was the special miracle performed there?
5. What principle respecting his personal attitude did Jesus enunciate in connection with the event?
6. How did the woman in Phoenicia hear of Jesus?
7. What happened on Jesus' return to the region of the Sea of Galilee?
8. What suggestive word for the language of the church?

9. In connection with what miracle was it spoken?
10. How did the people of Decapolis speak of the Christ?
11. Where did the feeding of the 4,000 occur?
12. What was the result to the 4,000 of being with Jesus?
13. In what spirit did the Pharisees question Jesus?
14. Against what insidious errors did Jesus warn his disciples?
15. What and where was a healing performed?

LESSON XIX. OUTLINE.

Part VI. Third Period of the Galilean Ministry.
Chapter 23. In Capernaum again.
Section 81. The shekel in the fish's mouth. Mt. 17:24-27. (Mk. 9:33a.)
Section 82. Discourse on the Kingdom of God. Mt. chap. 18. Mk. 9:33-50. Lu. 9:46-50.
Chapter 24. An Autumn visit to Jerusalem.
Section 83. Christ at the Feast of Tabernacles. Lu. 7:31-52.
Chapter 25. The woman taken in adultery. Jo. 7:53-8:11.
Section 26. Discourse on the Light of the World. Jo. 8:12-30.
Section 27. Discourse on spiritual freedom. Jo. 8:31-59.
Section 28. The heart that trusts forever sings. And feels as high as the eagle's wings. Come good or ill. Whatever today, tomorrow brings. It is His will.

MRS. C. F. MENNINGER.

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BIBLE STUDIES

"ABOUT MY FATHER'S BUSINESS."

Luke II, 40-52—Feb. 11.

"How is it that ye sought Me? What ye sought is about My Father's business"—v. 11.

The wonderful babe of Bethlehem "grew and waxed strong, filled with wisdom; and the grace of God was upon him." He was a boy, and a course far in advance of imperfect children. The schooling privileges to which he was entitled, the education gleaned by the masses came to him through contact with his elders; history itself being handed down from generation to generation, except for the scholarly.

Now that we have opportunities than this were able to read; but Jesus was amongst those few—not because of schooling privileges in His youth, but because of His brilliant mind, which retained everything that came to it.

The superiority of the abilities of Jesus are attested by the fact that when he entered the synagogue of His home city, Nazareth. His talent as a reader and exponent was so generally recognized that the service was usually turned over to Him. (Luke iv, 16.) Yet the people marvelled, saying, "How comes it that Jesus is a man of letters, having never gone to school? And they all bare Him witness, and wondered at the grace of His speech (Luke iv, 22.) The explanation is that Jesus was perfect, while all about Him were imperfect.

Our lesson relates particularly to an incident which occurred when Jesus was twelve years old. His "parents" obeyed the Mosaic Law by attending the Feast of Passover at Jerusalem every year, and on the occasion of Jesus' twelfth birthday. The expression, "parents," does not imply that Saint Luke supposed Joseph to be the father of Jesus any more than that Mary considered her married life as the work of Joseph as being His "father." He was the foster father of Jesus. The language is in exact harmony with what we would use under such circumstances today.

Jesus knew of His peculiar birth and of the great prophecies which centered in Him, related by Gabriel to His mother, and he was on the alert to fulfill His mission—the will of the Heavenly Father. He surmised that since at 12 years of age Jewish boys came under the requirements of the Law Covenant, this arrangement might possibly have been made as an indication of His proper course.

Therefore He resolved to consult the Jewish authorities respecting the teachings of the Law on this subject. He sought intercourse with the learned Scribes and Pharisees and Doctors, during the week of the feast of the Passover. The great men of His nation were engaged in public functions, and hence His best opportunity for conference with them was at the close of the feast, and whenever He could gain their attention.

When the time came for the return journey He had not finished His investigations of the Scripture teachings on this point. His parents thinking that He was in the company with some of their relatives, went a day's journey homeward before they ascertained that He was not in the company. Then they returned and sought Him and finally found Him in the temple discussing the matter with the teachers, causing the quarrel of the hour—the time at which public ministry might be begun, according to the Law. Evidently He had just finished His quest, for He was not a boy at 12, but a man.

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came the perfect boy; the perfect boy became the perfect youth; the perfect youth became the perfect man; and at 30 years of age was ripe and ready to be offered as an acceptable sacrifice of sweet savor to God, on behalf of mankind—"the Just for the unjust."

EVERYBODY'S BIBLE BOX.

Q.—When will the world come to an end? (R. W. L.)
Answer.—According to the scriptures, the term "world" signifies age or dispensation. Three great "worlds" are outlined in the divine plan of the ages, as revealed in the Bible. (See II Peter 3:5-13.) The first "world" or dispensation passed away at the time of the flood. The second "world," or present evil world, "is likewise to pass away, in a fiery time of trouble—not a literal "fire," but a destructive season of lawlessness that will destroy the "elements"—labor, capitalistic etc., that go to make up the present social order. "The world to come wherein dwelleth righteousness" will never come to end, but is to last throughout eternity. "The world that now is (Titus 2:13), is already being violently shaken, and is beginning to crumble away financially. The evidence against us, in the fulfillment of the scripture prophecies, are clear and strong that within the next decade, the new and better order ("the world to come") will be established in the earth.

Q.—"Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" (I Corinthians 6:2.) Does this signify that the world is not now on trial for eternal life? (C. J. W.)
Answer.—This scripture is in conformity with the united testimony of the apostles to the effect that the world's judgment day, or trial time, is not in this present Christian era, but is yet future—"God hath appointed a day (a thousand year day)—II Peter 3:8) in the which he will judge the world in righteousness" (Acts 17:31.) Those who, in association with Christ, shall judge the world in mercy, justice and love, are now being qualified for that high office, by having developed in them saintly, Christlike characters. These "saints," who have learned to love their neighbors as themselves, and who even love their enemies, are the every inducement to the world of mankind to come into harmony with the gracious requirements of the divine law of love and justice, and receive the life of Christ. The fact that the followers of Christ are not judging now, proves conclusively that the world is not on trial for eternal life at the present time. The judgment day, in place of being a time of terror, distress and sorrow, is represented in the scriptures as being a special time of joy and gladness for the world.—Psalm xvi.

Q.—What is meant by Divine nature, angelic nature, human nature, etc. What is meant by the word "nature" in these connections? (A. P. N.)
Answer.—The word "nature" in its true sense, as applied to creatures, or beings, signifies the kind of existence and sphere of existence in which they live and move and have their being. Thus when human nature is referred to, it signifies the conditions of existence relating to the human race. The angelic nature is in a higher and different sphere of existence than that of humanity. Psalm viii. As there is a vast difference between the conditions of existence of a fish and a bird, so was the angelic nature, and there is just as wide a difference between the human and an angelic. The Divine nature is the highest of all natures, and is different from all others in this respect, that it is eternal, immortal, and therefore, immortal. Whereas all other natures possess life that is not inherent, but is sustained by partaking of the life-giving elements peculiar to the different natures. A blending of natures would be a hybrid thing—a monstrosity. The Lord Jesus experienced two changes of nature—from spiritual to human (Hebrews ii, 16, 17) and from human to Divine. It is promised in the Scriptures that the faithful followers of Christ shall also experience a change of nature, and will "become partakers of the Divine nature"—the nature of God.—II Peter i, 4.

Q.—"For we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men."—I Corinthians iv, 9. How did the Apostles make a "spectacle" to the angels? (Curious.)
Answer.—Evidently the angels and all other spirit beings, of which there are millions upon millions (Revelation v, 11) are interested observers of the events transpiring upon this little globe of ours. What the race of mankind is learning by actual experience the spirits are learning by observation. As the poet has expressed the thought—"All the world's a stage and men and women merely players." The word "spectacle," in the marginal rendering of the Authorized Version, is "show." The Apostles were being made "a show off" before the world, and angels and men, because of their loyalty to the cause of Christ. Enduring all manner of persecutions, and being regarded as religious fanatics—"fools" because of their prominence in advocating the teachings of Christ, they were specially observed. Thus it was that the Master Himself, Jesus Christ, His death, and His resurrection. He preached a powerful sermon in pantomime to the "spirits in prison" (The fallen angels who disobeyed in the time of Noah. II Peter ii, 4; I Peter iii, 18-20).

CHURCH NOTICES.
First Methodist Episcopal church, Sixth and Harrison streets. Rev. Frank Lafayette Loveland, D. D., pastor. Morning service 11 o'clock, evening, "Paul's Paradox of Love," 7:30 p. m. subject, "The Mathematical Ideal of Compound Interest Applied to Every Day Life." A most cordial invitation extended to all. Strangers in the city especially invited.

First United Presbyterian church, corner Eighth and Topeka avenue, Rev. J. A. Reister, D. D., pastor. Preaching 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. by the pastor.

First Baptist church, Rev. Robert Gordon, pastor. Morning worship 11 a. m. subject, "Faint Hearted Men," evening service 7:30 p. m. subject, "Remembering Another Man's Wife." A brief organ recital by Prof. D. H. Seymour begins at 7:15.

Seward Avenue M. E. church, corner Seward and Scotland, J. W. Johnston, pastor. Sermon at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. Highland Park, sermon at 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m.

First Presbyterian church, Harrison street. Rev. James E. Adams, pastor. Preaching at 11 a. m., and his many friends will be glad to hear him. The pastor, Rev. Stephen S. Estey, D. D., will preach at 7:30 p. m.

First Congregational church, corner Harrison and Seventh streets. Rev. Arthur S. Henderson, D. D., pastor. Morning worship 11 a. m. sermon, "Christ's Present-Day Body." A study

Second United Presbyterian church, corner Fourth and Branner streets. Rev. Jay Carroll Everett, pastor. Morning and evening worship, 11 a. m. and 7:30 p. m. by the pastor. Sermon at 11 a. m. subject, "The Bright Side of Life." The organ and the Loyal Temperance Legion will assist.

Potwin Presbyterian church, Rev. H. L. Soler, pastor. Sermon at 11:00 a. m. by Mr. Hayes, educational secretary, Y. M. C. A. Special Endeavor day program at 7 p. m.

Central Avenue Christian church. A special address will be delivered by Mrs. J. E. McDaniel at 7:30 p. m. Regular worship at 11 a. m., when the pastor will preach on the theme, "How Much Better is Man Than a Sheep."

German Methodist Episcopal church, corner Tyler and West Fifth streets. John Koehler, pastor. Sermon at 10:45 a. m. subject, "Decision for God," evening meeting at 7:30 p. m., subject, "The Christian Walk."

Westminster Presbyterian church, Rev. Ralph Ward, pastor. Christian Endeavor at 6:15 is the only service which will be held on tomorrow. There will be no Sunday school nor preaching services. The regular services on next Sunday.

English Lutheran church, Fifth and Harrison street, Rev. M. F. Troxall, D. D., president of the Midland college, preach at 11 a. m. and evening at 7:30 p. m.

Grace Cathedral, corner Eighth avenue and Polk street. The Very Reverend J. P. de B. Kaye, dean. Holy communion 7:30 a. m. Morning service and sermon 11 a. m. Choral evensong and address at 8 o'clock.

First United Brethren church. The revival meetings continue. Preaching by the assisting pastor. Evening service preceded by illustrated song service.

Second United Presbyterian church. Preaching at 11 a. m. subject, "Heavenly Registration," 7:30 p. m. subject, "A Friend at the Door." Rev. A. H. Griffith of Little Rock, Arkansas, will preach morning and evening.

"Remembering Another Man's wife"

is the subject on which Rev. Robert Gordon will speak at First Baptist Church Sunday Night.
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